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DEPT FOR EAP/MTS, G/AIAG, L/DL, EAP/EX, AND OES/IHA
USAID FOR ANE/CLEMENTS AND GH/CARROLL
DEPT ALSO PASS TO HHS/WSTEIGER/MSTLOUIS AND HHS/NIH
DEPT ALSO PASS TO DOJ for OFL
GENEVA FOR WHO/HOHMAN
USDA/FAS/OSTA BRANT, ROSENBLUM
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SUBJECT: INDONESIA - NOVEMBER 14 AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Indonesia's media has alarmed international press with reports of 17 likely hospitalized bird flu cases in Makassar, but health experts are suggesting that these are more likely cases of mild influenza-like illness (ILI) and pneumonia. The Makassar hospital has sent samples to the National Institute of Health Research and Development (NIHRD) for analysis. NIHRD anticipates releasing results in two days. According to the Jakarta office of the World Health Organization (WHO) NIHRD did confirm another new case of avian influenza on November 12, but the Ministry of Health has not officially announced the result for posting on the WHO website. Minister of Health Siti Fadilah Supari traveled to the United States on November 12 to be a featured speaker at the Seventh International Bird Flu Summit in Las Vegas, Nevada. Supari's ministry funded television show "enters its third rerun season. USG agencies report on latest activities. End Summary.

Makassar Cases and New H5N1 Death

¶2. (SBU) Indonesia media has released reports that up to 17 patients have been hospitalized in Makassar with suspected bird flu. The media reports that preliminary rapid tests have confirmed H5N1 and that poultry has been dying in the area. Sources within the World Health Organization (WHO), Ministry of Health (MOH) and the district are advising that rapid tests may have been done on some patients for influenza A, and not H5N1. Only two of the 17 patients appear to be experiencing fever at this time. Officials are speculating that these cases appear to resemble influenza-like illness and not H5N1, with several cases being pneumonia. The Makassar hospital has sent samples for all patients to NIHRD for testing. NIHRD anticipates releasing results in two days. Participatory Disease/Response personnel in the area are culling fowl and monitoring the situation closely.

¶3. (SBU) According to WHO sources, NIHRD confirmed on November 12, a new fatal case of H5N1 from samples of a 15 year-old girl from Semarang, Central Java. The girl died after four days of hospitalization in Semarang. Although the Ministry of Health has yet to announce the case publically for inclusion on the World Health Organization website, MOH officials immediately notified the WHO Jakarta office. However, press reports that Minister Supari is publicly denying the case stating "Both of the laboratory tests showed that she was negative of bird flu, so the total death toll (of bird flu) remains 112."

Supari in Vegas and on TV

14. (U) Minister Supari traveled to Las Vegas on November 12 to deliver a keynote address at the 7th International Bird Flu Summit. The conference will take place on November 13 - 14, 2008, at the Monte Carlo Resort and Casino Hotel, in South Las Vegas, Nevada.

15. (U) Minister Supari's television program "Chitchatting with Madam Minister" has entered its third season of reruns. Started in June 2007, the show provides 13 episodes, all featuring Minister Supari interacting with a live audience of housewives, students, or youth groups. Each episode runs approximately one hour and aims at educating the general public about health policies on such topics as health insurance for the uninsured, health for hajj pilgrims, sample sharing, heart disease, asthma, and infectious diseases.

16. (SBU) According to sources, MOH public outreach funds have financed the series, with production costs running at \$50,000 per show. The show was conceived as a way to combat negative publicity that the Minister was receiving in early 2007. Each show follows a standard format that includes Minister Supari interacting with expert guests (usually Director Generals from the MOH), followed by a question and answer session, a quiz, and ending with entertainment such as singing or dancing performed by the audience.

Animal Health Activities

17. (U) The USAID funded Community Based Avian Influenza Control

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(CBAIC) Project is developing key messages for use by mass media and stakeholders following a series of discussions from technical partners and Indonesian officials. USAID and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) plan to conduct a decontamination campaign at key points in the poultry production and marketing chain to minimize the spread of AI virus by the end of the year.

18. (U) Approximately twenty Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) auditors/inspectors completed a one week APHIS funded training course to assess biosecurity status of commercial poultry farms. Participating farms passing inspection receive "AI-free" certificates good for two years issued by the MOA. APHIS also plans to begin market interventions such as perimeter control in slaughter houses and markets.

Human Health Activities

19. (SBU) CDC along with WHO and MOH are in the process of implementing an early warning system for early outbreak detection and response in Lampung province, Sumatra. The program will be expanded to Bali and Sulawesi provinces over the next six months. CDC and WHO continue to work with the MOH on a follow-up simulation exercise for epicenter containment in Sulawesi province in February 2009. The scenario will be different from the Bali exercise earlier in the year and will emphasize testing operational guidelines in an urban environment.

110. (SBU) NIHRD is finalizing documentation for renewal of its cooperative agreement with CDC- Atlanta. NIHRD will use funds to support influenza testing for patients with influenza-like illness in a network of primary health care centers and patients with severe acute respiratory illness in a network of eight hospitals. CDC awarded funds to NIHRD through the REDI Center to conduct a prospective cohort study of approximately 600 high risk (for H5N1 exposure) poultry workers from Tangerang municipality to begin in January 2009.

HUME